



# City of Charleston

JOHN J. TECKLENBURG  
MAYOR

## WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

### NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission will be held beginning at 5:00 p.m., June 14, 2017 at 720 Magnolia Road (The Schoolhouse), Charleston, SC 29407. The agenda will be as follows:

### **AGENDA**

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| 1. Welcome & Call to Order   | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid   |
| 2. Approval of Minutes from<br>April 12, 2017 & May 10, 2017   | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid   |
| 3. <a href="#">Plan West Ashley Work-in-Progress</a><br>Presentation Recap   | Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator   |
| 4. Plan West Ashley Feedback<br>from Commission Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• community engagement</li><li>• infrastructure &amp; sustainability</li><li>• transportation</li><li>• community design &amp; land use</li><li>• economic development</li><li>• housing</li></ul> | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid &<br>Commission Members   |
| 5. Affordable Housing Strategies:<br>Maryville/Ashleyville & Area Wide   | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid &<br>Geona Shaw-Johnson, Director, Department of<br>Housing & Community Development |
| 6. Meeting Location  | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid   |
| 7. Other Business  | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid &<br>Commission Members   |
| 8. Public Comment Period   | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid   |
| 9. Adjournment   | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid   |

The next West Ashley Revitalization Commission meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 12, 2017. The location of the meeting will be determined and announced at a later date. For more information on the Plan West Ashley master planning initiative visit: [www.planwestashley.com](http://www.planwestashley.com)

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, people who need alternative formats, ASL (American Sign Language) Interpretation or other accommodation please contact Janet Schumacher at (843) 577-1389 or email to [schumacherj@charleston-sc.gov](mailto:schumacherj@charleston-sc.gov) three business days prior to the meeting.

## **WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION**

April 12, 2017

A meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission was held this date at 5:00 p.m., at The Schoolhouse, 720 Magnolia Road.

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

### **PRESENT**

Councilmember Peter Shahid, Chair, Anne Frances Bleecker, Justin Ferira, Joseph Grant, Harry Gregorie, Diane Hamilton, Donna Jacobs, City Councilmember James Lewis, Charleston County Councilmember Brantley Moody, John Osborne, Jimmy Palassis, Charles Smith, Mayor John Tecklenberg and Councilmember Marvin Wagner. **STAFF:** Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator, and Christopher Morgan, Planning Director.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Bleecker moved for approval of the minutes.

Mr. Osborne seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Communications Subcommittee Report - Maria Aselage, Chair**

Ms. Aselage said the subcommittee met last week. She asked Chair Shahid to call for a vote on the communications policy presented at last month's meeting. The policy was sent by email to the Commission members with the request to review it and vote on it at the April 12 meeting.

Chair Shahid called for a motion to adopt the policy.

Ms. Bleecker moved to adopt the policy.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

The policy was adopted unanimously.

Ms. Aselage said [Planwestashley.com](http://Planwestashley.com) website is up and running. They asked the West Ashley community members to look at the schedules for all of the upcoming town meetings and charrettes. The website also gave the community the opportunity to give feedback on what they think needs to be improved in West Ashley.

Ms. Aselage said the subcommittee has been tasked with supplementing the city in spreading the news about the upcoming charrettes and town meetings. They are supplementing those areas that are more challenging to reach where people are segmented and they are targeting their approach. They have divided the groups and have assigned subcommittee members to target those groups. They have a subcommittee member who will target senior citizens and distribute fliers to the senior center facilities. She will be reaching out to the Hispanic community and will be translating the flyers into Spanish. They are also reaching out to the African American community and also to the schools because they want everyone represented at the charrettes and they want to include the teenagers because they think they have some great insight. They also have one subcommittee member reaching out to the Jewish community. Michael Whack, Special Assistant for Quality of Life from the Mayor's Office, sent the information to the churches and some of the other subcommittee members will double up on some of the other churches such as those in the African American community and the Catholic Church.

Ms. Aselage said they were also looking into the possibility of having some yard signs sponsors. They were hoping to find an organization that is willing to make those and sponsor those so they can distribute some signs in some areas.

Mr. Grant said the last time there was a question from the audience as it relates to what is a charrette.

Ms. Aselage said she will refer that question to Ms. Herring to answer in her presentation.

Mr. Smith said he asked earlier and a few people suggested they may want to look at the reports already generated by the City for the different City committees and advisory boards so if something ends up on the agenda that has a 29407 or 29414 zip code it gets shifted to a report for the Commission so they can see any West Ashley project that come before any of the committees and boards at the City level.

Chair Shahid said that could be done.

### **Work to Date Summary**

Chair Shahid said the Dover Kohl staff has been in town and spent a good part of March in the Charleston area interviewing stakeholders. Members of the Commission met at Hampton Inn on Savannah Highway March 13, along with County officials, City Councilmembers and other stakeholders. He attended that meeting as well and appreciated the insights, ideas and questions of the other Councilmembers concerning this process.

### **Schedule of Upcoming Community Events, Planning Studio and Charrette**

Ms. Herring commented about the good feeling of the sense of community in the room and asked the audience to sustain that feeling and spread it to their neighbors, family, co-workers and church members over the next three to four weeks. She wanted as many people as possible in West Ashley to be involved in this planning effort.

Ms. Herring noted some people questioned whether the City would listen to what they would have to say about West Ashley's future or if the consultants will take their concerns and suggestions into account. She said the answer was yes. There is no plan, no submitted drawings have been made, no documents have been written and there is no suggested land use. The consultants needed the residents' input before they can begin preparing this plan. The residents are an active part of this planning process and their voices does matter so they need to get involved.

At the end of April (April 24 and 25) there will be community workshop events. There will be eight days of community events in May. There will be couple more workshop events and a weeklong planning studio that will have additional community events. Then there will be a wrap up of this intense planning process on May 13 with a presentation.

In response to Mr. Grant's question regarding what is a charrette, Ms. Herring said it is an intensive planning session where you can have everyone providing input. It is not just something the planners do or professionals. It is an intensive session with lots engagement, input, and ideas, and where pictures are drawn and you write suggestions.

Ms. Herring said she wanted to emphasize the next four community events where the residents provide their input. This is the kickoff portion of this planning process. They divided West Ashley into areas to make it easier for people to go to meeting locations. However, if you live in Area 1, you can go to any meeting area that fits your schedule best. You don't have to go to all four, you can go to all four or you can go to any one of these meetings, whatever fits your schedule. These are workshop sessions scheduled for three hours to make there is enough time to go over everything. You don't have to stay the entire three hours. She asked that people stay as long as they can to share their information.

Area 1 meeting will be Monday, April 24, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at John Wesley United Methodist Church on Savannah Highway. The following night, Tuesday, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. there will be another community workshop event at West Ashley Middle School, just off Highway 61 and Raoul Wallenberg Boulevard. A week will pass and there will be some community events on Saturday for those who work late and are unable to attend during the week. They try to provide as many opportunities for the community to participate as is possible. Saturday morning, May 6, there will be a workshop at Bees Landing Recreation Center in the Grand Oaks neighborhood and on Saturday afternoon, they will have the last workshop event at West Ashley High School. The two school events will be held in the cafeteria and there will be signage for them.

Ms. Herring explained what to expect when you come to a workshop. The consultants will make a brief presentation about the goals of the plan and what is involved in the planning process. There will be tables and chairs where one can sit in small groups with friends, co-workers or strangers. There will be maps on the tables with markers, dots and sticky notes. Facilitators will be at each table to help guide the

conversation about what you think the best qualities about West Ashley are or where there are issues in West Ashley. You can identify where you live and if there is a problem in the section where you live or an opportunity to make some new commercial/retail. You don't have to be a designer, a professional or artistic. You can be an average citizen because sometimes it is the average citizen that has the best ideas because your experience on a daily basis is different from those who would see it from a professional level.

Ms. Herring said your participation in the first four workshops is important because the information the consultants get from those first four workshops will help guide the rest of the process. The rest of the process will be the week long planning studio at Citadel Mall just off Center Court. They will have a working studio. There will be tables, screens and maps. This is where the consultants will do their work all week long. Then they will have big community presentations in the Center Court area. You can come by the planning studio anytime. It will open Monday midday and close Friday.

During that week event there will be key community events. There will be a recap Monday night of what the consultants heard from the first four workshops – what they heard from you, what they learned from you and what additional questions you might have. Tuesday morning the Chamber is hosting a Business in Your Backyard event where they are going to make sure you are getting information from businesses in West Ashley. It is open to everyone. There will also be brown bag lunch on Tuesday with one of the consultants, Gabe Klein, from CityFi.

The regular meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission will be held May 10 at Citadel Mall in Center Court. The consultants will do a quick presentation and summarize the input they have received from the previous sessions. Then they will break up so you can wander through the studio. They will have information on easels to look at the work in progress.

Ms. Herring said if you can't make any of the community events during the week, she thinks it is very important to make the Saturday morning work in progress presentation. This is where the consultants are going to take all of the information they have heard from the citizens and incorporate it into designs, drawings, recommendations and concepts. This will be the opportunity to say what they are getting right. They will have screens showing what they have worked based on what the citizens said. You can vote on what you like or don't like, and you will know instantly what you and others think about the design concepts. The consultants will take all of this information they got from this week's work and will go back to their home offices where they will prepare drafts of the master plan. Those drafts will come back to the community and the Commission for input and guidance. A schedule of the events during the week of the charrette will be available on all of the webpages once it is finalized. All events are open to everyone.

Chair Shahid thanked Ms. Herring for her presentation. He encouraged the residents to take part in one of these sessions.

Mayor Tecklenberg thanked John Hagerty for the use of the facility and his hospitality. He noted he met a young man who just started a technology company in the Schoolhouse. They have offices in Europe and the northeast. They opened one here and he lives three blocks down the street so he can walk to work. Mayor Tecklenberg thought that it was remarkable they were starting new businesses, technology businesses, high paying jobs and people who live West Ashley have the opportunity to work here. He also noted the rededication of Randolph Park, the reopening of the West Ashley Farmers Market next Wednesday, the opening of the Schoolhouse, the walls going up for Whole Foods on Savannah Highway, the \$12 million drainage project just up the street on Magnolia Road and the ribbon cutting for the Focus Meds pharmacy at Harrell Square, the first black owned pharmacy in the Charleston area. He thanked Ms. Herring and the Commission for marshalling this process.

### **Other Business**

Chair Shahid reminded everyone about the opening of the West Ashley Farmers Market that will run from April 19 until October 4.

### **Public Comment**

Ledlie Bell said she had a negative experience from participating in a planning charrette when those neighborhoods immediately by the Ashley Bridges got together and the City hired an established firm to tell them what to do about revitalizing the shopping centers. They came up with some innovating and

exciting ideas. But shopping centers are privately owned and privately leased. It took ages to implement part of that plan. Her concern was they get people excited and the private citizens don't have to an understanding of when you're working with private property with no limits on implementation. She asked that they not be given a mission that is not realistic and that is not within a good time frame. She hoped this can be addressed earlier, especially in reference to Citadel Mall.

Chair Shahid said when it comes to private property they don't have control over the private property owner. He believed with this process it will be much broader than just directed towards private property owners. There are so many other issues like transportation, drainage and run off, and ideas that are on the table they are going to be addressing where they do have a lot of ability to direct and control. They can't tell private owners what to do but maybe they can cooperate with them and work with them in that area.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Marcia L. Grant  
Council Secretary